

VZCZCXRO9712  
PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN  
RUEHLZ RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHAH #1042 2701237  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 271237Z SEP 07  
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9449  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 2808  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0630  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0506  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 1082  
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 001042

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASCH](#) [SCUL](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: ASHGABAT INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
SUDDENLY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

¶1. The Ashgabat International School (a Quality Schools International supported by the Department), Turkmenistan's only English-language expatriate school, suddenly and unexpectedly received a request from state-controlled Turkmen television to come and interview teachers and students at the school September 28. According to the school's director, television station representatives reported President Berdimuhamedov had called from New York and instructed the station to do a story on the school. The director was not sure what kind of theme the station had in mind, but hoped it would be an opportunity to profile the school's modern, western-style curriculum and structure. He was also hopeful that the new attention will facilitate the school's registration after years of effort.

¶2. COMMENT: Registering the school is one of the Charge's priority projects he has been working with the Foreign Ministry, arguing the school needs to be registered so it can expand into bigger quarters to be ready for the children of foreign investors. This unexpected break comes on the heels of other favorable, though non-political, television coverage that has been playing on local television (including coverage of U.S. ecology efforts and Nevada National Guard programs here) and a new request to feature U.S. businesses active in Turkmenistan. Such attention from the president should give the school's efforts to register a big boost. Registration would allow the school, which is bursting at the seams, to refurbish buildings and possibly add additional needed structures to the facility. The school, like other foreign-funded educational establishments here, has received many more applications for enrollment than it can accept. If it becomes a legitimate, registered institution, it could potentially become a model for those seeking to reform the country's enfeebled public education system. And it would help to make Ashgabat more attractive to international businesses. END COMMENT.  
HOAGLAND